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Advisory Announcement

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Prince William Sound Area Walleye Pollock Pelagic Trawl Fishery Closure Emergency Order # 2-GF-E-07-21

The directed fishery for walleye pollock using pelagic trawl gear in the Prince William Sound Area (PWS; Registration Area E) **will close at 5:00 p.m. February 15** due to reaching the annual bycatch limit for salmon.

The directed walleye pollock pelagic trawl fishery in the PWS Inside District opened January 20 with a guideline harvest level (GHL) of 4.93 million lb. The Inside District is divided into three sections: Hinchinbrook, Knight Island, and Bainbridge with pollock harvest from any section restricted to 60% of the GHL or 2.96 million lb. The Hinchinbrook Section closed at 12:00 noon on January 31 when 60% of the pollock GHL was taken in that section.

There are also restrictions to the amount of bycatch that may be harvested from any section and from the fishery in total. Total bycatch is limited to 5% or less of the total pollock harvested and is apportioned into five species groups as follows:

	Species Group					Total
	Rockfish	Salmon	Shark	Squid	Other	
Bycatch Apportionment	0.50%	0.04%	0.96%	3.00%	0.50%	5.00%
Annual Bycatch Cap (lb)	24,637	1,971	47,302	147,820	24,637	246,367
60% Section Bycatch Cap (lb)	14,782	1,183	28,381	88,692	14,782	147,820

Based on projected harvest levels, the annual bycatch limit for salmon of 1,971 lb will be achieved at the time of the closure.

At the time of the closure, it is estimated that approximately 95% of the pollock GHL will be harvested.

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Orders 5, 6, and 8, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Orders. COVID-19 Health Orders may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-order/>.

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